THE Devouring Informers OF Briſtol, &c.

Being an Additional Account of ſome late Proceedings of thoſe Ravenous Beaſts of Prey, againſt *Diſſenting-Proteſtants*.

Briſtol April 22. 1682.

FOr theſe two days our Old Informers Mr. *Helliar* and Accomplices, *Lugg*, *Tilley*, *Caſſe*, *Patrick*, *Hoar* and *Watkins* with their Aſſiſtants, have been Levying Diſtreſſes upon ſeveral Proteſtant-Diſſenters, and in the Management of it, behaved themſelves with that Fury and unparalel degree of Violence and Arbitrary Force, that it fills our Hearts with Sadneſs, and our Thoughts with no leſs Terrour then Amazement.

Part of them, (for they divide themſelves in two Bodies) that is, Mr. *Hellier*, *Tilley*, *Lutz* and *Watkins*, the Marſhal, with their late Aſſiſtant *Summers* the Butcher, came to the Houſe of Mr. *Richard Marſh* in *Cornſtreet*, who is a perſon known to be one of the Conſiderableſt Merchants of this City. Theſe entring his Houſe to make a Diſtreſs for 10 *l.* broke open his Counter Door, and ſearched for Money, and then went into an Inward Counter, and there ſeiz'd and carried away his Journal, Leiger, Caſh, Invoyce Books, and ſeveral other Books of Accounts to the number of thirty, alſo a Bundle of Written Papers, and ſeveral ſorts of Houſhold Goods. Not content with this, they ſeized alſo the Proviſions of Victuals then in the Houſe, being three pieces of Pork, and two pieces of Beef, two Pullets, 4 Neats-Tongues, all which they carried away; beſides this they ſeized a Gammon of Bacon, and other Victuals and Drink which they Conſumed on the place, ſpending near three Hours time in Commanding his Houſe, and Ranſacking ſeveral Chambers, particularly the Chamber of his Wife, then Lying in: During this ſtay in his Houſe, their Behaviour were ſo Inſolent, that they greatly affrighted not only his Servants, but all thoſe Spectators, whoſe occaſions and Reſpect called them into his Houſe. The Servants they Hectored and Treated in Language to this purpoſe. *How dare you touch any thing now we are here.* Of the Spectators, one a Butcher, another a Butter-Woman, bringing Meat, and Butter into his Houſe being Market day, was forced to carry away both, and eſcaped with difficulty of their having it taken from them. This Gentleman Mr *Marſh* had formerly taken from him, a Tun of Wine worth 20 *l* which they Sold for 4 *l.* and to make up the Diſtreſs 10 *l.* they forced themſelves into his Man: Counter, and took

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from him in Caſh 6 *l.* odd Money; He is not alone under this Oppreſſion. For theſe Informers have made ſeveral Diſtreſſes upon others, to the value of ſeveral Score of Pounds; a certain Account of Particulars you may expect by the next. Their manner of Levying of Diſtreſs is as follows, *viz.* When they enter a Shop, albeit there is abundance of Goods in view, yet they break open Cheſts, Counters, *&c.* And thence take away the Money, if no Money to be had, then they take either Shop or Houſhold Goods, and of them generally to double the value; if any durſt ſpeak to them by way of Reproof for theſe unreaſonable Proceedings, they then Huff and Threaten to ſend them to Priſon, which Power they aſſume to themſelves commonly when they go to diſturb the *Quakers* Meetings, thinking no doubt, but that they are priviledged to it by their Office of Conſtable, and the example of their Grand Abettor, and Brother Informer Sheriff *Knight*, as theſe Actions bring great Anxiety and Fear upon ſeveral of His Majeſties Subjects, to think what is the thing there deſigned; ſo they are aggravated the higher in the Breaſt of many on this Conſideration, that its generally believed by the long date of the Warrants, theſe Diſtreſſes have been Levied for Convictions, made Clandeſtinely in a Tavern, which was what the Mayor and ſome of the Juſtices laſt Seſſions gave a publick Reproof to, and would have taken up the Warrants, but were denyed by Sheriff *Knight*, who was menaced deſervedly with the good Behaviour for it: One thing is more obſervable, that the great Havock made in theſe two days Diſtreſſes, is, that the Fines they Diſtrain for, are for a Meeting, where there is no Preaching, Praying, or any actual exerciſe of Religion to diſtinguiſh it from the Liturgy of the Church.

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The Malice of the Informers are ſo great againſt Mr. *Ch. Jones* Junior, that all their Family is likely to ſuffer for it. Yeſterday and this day, they took from his Father, and himſelf, and two Brothers, about 80 *l.* value in Goods: Great are the Conſternations of the People on theſe Proceedings. For further Information, the Reader is referred to the late Printed Letter, Entituled, *More Sad and Lamentable News from* Briſtol.

I reſt Yours, &c.

5 NO 58